

# Diversity Newsletter

Topics for Teachers



Ministry of  
Education

Fall 2010 Volume 4

Welcome to the Fall 2010 edition of **Diversity Newsletter: Topics for Teachers**.

## **Supporting Student**

**Behaviour** is the topic of this edition.

This newsletter outlines recent research about outcomes for students with behaviour needs in BC, research-based foundational principles to underpin school and classroom based behavioural support strategies, and some practical strategies to try in your class or with support teams.

Please email ideas for future topics to [EDUC.DiversityandEquity@gov.bc.ca](mailto:EDUC.DiversityandEquity@gov.bc.ca)

*Susan Kennedy*  
Executive Director  
Diversity and Equity and  
Early Learning

## Effective Practices: Supporting Students with Behaviour Challenges

Earlier this year (Spring 2010) the Ministry of Education asked six school districts to share specific practices they believe may have contributed to students with behaviour challenges performing above the provincial average.

SD No. 34 (Abbotsford)  
SD No. 41 (Burnaby)  
SD No. 43 (Coquitlam)  
SD No. 45 (West Vancouver)  
SD No. 67 (Okanagan Skaha)  
SD No. 85 (Vancouver Island North)

Responses provided by the districts were analyzed and findings were summarized in a report entitled *Helping Students with Behaviour Challenges Succeed in the BC School System – Effective Practices Report* (August 2010).

It is hoped that sharing effective practices will enable all school districts to better support the social and emotional development of students with behaviour challenges and, at the same time, increase their academic engagement.

Educators in the six participating districts credit student success to staff who:

- really believe in education for all learners
- are willing to remain flexible, to give something a try, and “to keep their eye on the prize”
- are focused on an asset/strength building approach
- uphold a global belief “we can do better”

And, to:

- collaborative practices that take place at all levels of schools
- close collaboration between regular education and special education teachers to ensure that adaptations are utilized appropriately

***“Relationship with classroom teachers is fundamental for communication and advocacy for students.”***

Other reported factors for success include:

- a strong understanding of positive behaviour support
- structures put in place quickly and early to address students with behaviour concerns
- where possible, students receiving behaviour support integrated with students without special needs
- district achievement contract goals and some school plans that address improvement of school completion rates and student achievement

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## Making Connections Conference

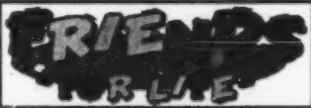
held each November in Richmond, BC, brings together international experts and school teams from across BC to share and learn about new strategies for supporting students

November 3-5, 2010

<http://bcpbs.wordpress.com/conference-information/>

Visit the BCPBS Newsletter at:

<http://educ.ubc.ca/research/promisingpractices/>



**FRIENDS for Life** is an evidence-based, resiliency and anxiety prevention program.

**FRIENDS for Life:**

- is a recommended learning resource in the Health and Career Education K-7 curriculum – Grade Collection list

- student workbooks, leader manuals, 1-day training, and additional resources provided to schools free of charge

- **FUNFRIENDS** is available for children aged 4 and 5

- **FRIENDS CHILD** is available to Grade 4 & 5 students (also available in French)

- **FRIENDS YOUTH** is available to Grade 7 students

- **FRIENDS** has recently embarked on a pilot of an early years version with kindergarten and Grade 1 students.

[www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/mental\\_health/friends.htm](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/mental_health/friends.htm)

## School-Wide Positive Behavioural Interventions & Supports

What is PBS?

School-wide PBS is a systems approach for establishing the social culture and environment needed for schools to achieve both social and academic success for all students. In PBS, all students are taught the school's expectations, routines in and out of the classroom, and are acknowledged for doing things "the right way." An instructional approach to discipline is used to encourage self-management and problem-solving skills.

Goals of PBS

The goals of School-wide PBS are to teach students social responsibility, prevent the development of problem behaviour, and to improve the academic performance of students through development of a positive, safe, and culturally responsive school culture.

Individual Systems.

Students with significant challenges receive individualized support to teach skills to meet students' basic needs.

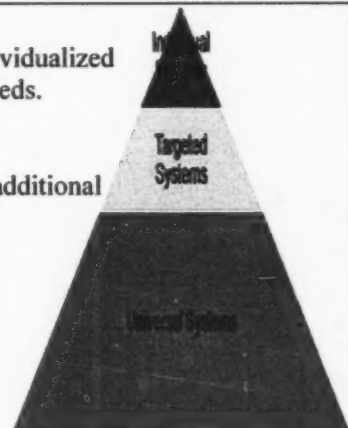
Targeted Systems.

Students at risk for challenges are provided the additional support needed to be successful.

Universal Systems.

All students supported by:

- teaching school expectations
- arranging the environment to encourage social responsibility.



Continuum of School-Wide Instructional and Positive Behaviour Support

PBS in Schools

BC has been a front-runner in implementing PBS in its schools, with the first schools implementing PBS more than 15 years ago. Since then, over 10,000 schools across the globe have started implementing PBS.

Outcomes of PBS

An impressive body of research validates the benefits of PBS for students and teachers. PBS has been shown to decrease problem behaviour and suspensions. PBS has also been shown to improve academic achievement and relationships among teachers and students.

For more information about PBS including examples from BC schools, free downloadable materials, and the up-coming Making Connections conference visit <http://bcpbs.wordpress.com> or <http://www.pbis.org> Also visit the new BCPBS newsletter at <http://educ.ubc.ca/research/promisingpractices/>

## Improving Student Engagement and Teacher Practice

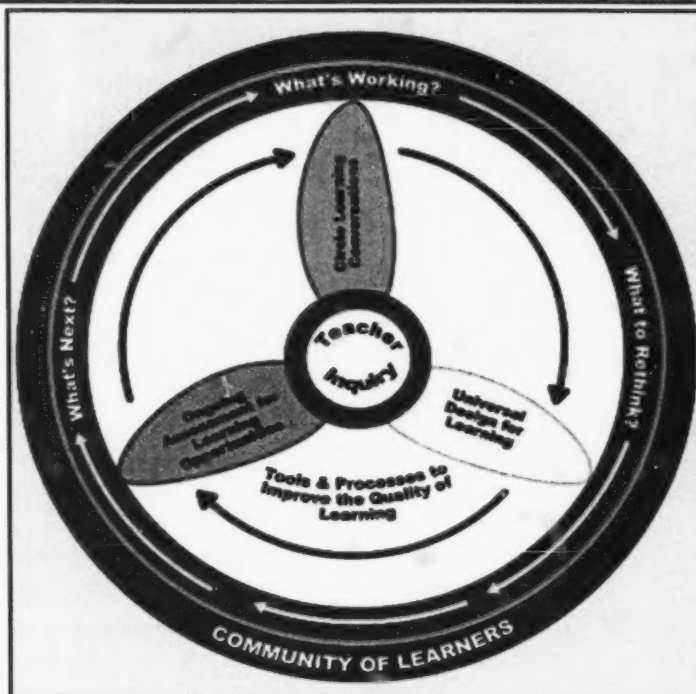
By Kerry Armstrong and Mary Lynn Epps SD#68

The Propeller Model is a flexible or staged framework or model of pedagogical practices that teachers can use to weave important principles of learning into their own instructional design. It provides a structure that educators can use to implement well-researched theories into their classrooms. Developed based on work done directly with students, the propeller model supports teachers to change and develop their own practice while achieving student success. Teacher practice improves reflectively with student learning because the propeller model mirrors student and teacher learning through inquiry.

The propeller model is centered around **Inquiry mindedness**; with blades of **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**; **Assessment for Learning (AFL)**; and comprehension through **Guided Discussion**.

**Inquiry mindedness** is the "engine" or the centre of the model. Supported by the work of the Network of Performance Based Schools, the use of questions to construct meaning and go deeper in understanding of concepts, have been established. Use of the cyclical process of inquiry has resulted in increased student success and engagement.

**Principles of Universal Design for Learning** ensure necessary access to the curriculum and success for all students. When free technological tools, such as text to speech and writing tools were made available to every student, each student found success in the classroom with their peers.



**Assessment for Learning (AFL)**, supported by the work of the BC Education Learning Council (BCELC), has changed how we teach and assess learning. Implementing the six strategies for formative classroom assessment resulted in increased student engagement and ownership of their own learning. Students communicate progress to their parents which improves communication and teamwork with parents and guardians.

Based on the fact that 40 percent of the Language Arts curriculum is based on oral communication skills, **Thinking through Guided Discussions** provides a setting for students to improve their comprehension through teacher guided, in-depth discussion and conversations in all content areas.

### Students Say...

*"Inquiry in this class helps you know what you are looking for so you don't write down just random information.*

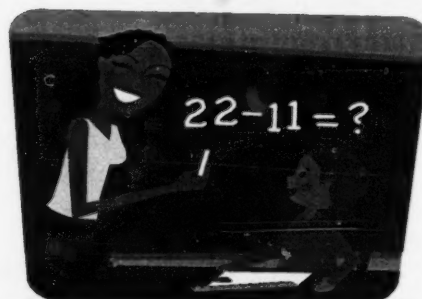
*We get all this information in our expert groups and we share it at the info circle meeting. Then we get to come up with our own question about what we want to know about and do our own inquiry.*

*After we do a bunch of stuff, we have a showcase where we invite other kids and our parents and other teachers and we show all the work we've done and what we learned in our inquiry.*

*For our last unit on Healthy Living, I did this cool inquiry about whether computer games were making people more or less healthy. I really believe I was able to change other people's opinions on health.*

*What I liked about the showcase was I was able to show my learning, reflect on it, and see other people's learning and projects."*

## Positive Behaviour Management for the Classroom Teacher



"Discipline without relationship leads to rebellion."

Dr. Josh McDowell

The following strategies may be helpful in improving connectedness and relationships with students who have behavioural challenges.

Frame expectations in the positive: state what *to* do instead of what *not* to do.

Identify specific behaviours, set criteria, and catch students doing the right thing. "I like the way you..."

Do you collect frequent flyer miles or reward points? Provide a similar system to encourage students to engage in a particular behaviour. When you reward the student, describe the specific behaviour as you reward them.

*Play Mystery Student.* Reward the whole class if that student models appropriate behaviour. At the end of the day the class guesses who the student was.

Have a place for time out, but don't call it time out...call it something cool.



Show students you like them: give them a high five, a light touch when talking to them, use their name, make eye contact and smile. Get to know about something they like, and connect with them about it.

Teach a formula for responding to situations:

- Share the feeling
- Explain the cause
- Give a solution or request

Teach them to think "How's this next decision going to affect me?"

Arrange for a supportive adult to believe in the child and provide unconditional acceptance.

Arrange for a staff member to "adopt" a student: to purposefully seek out the child, greet and get to know him or her.

Give the student advance warning about changes to routines.

Provide materials ahead of time or pre-teach part of a lesson in advance so the student can shine in class.

Be quick and succinct when you address a problem. Reduce verbiage.

Create an opportunity for the student to help out, work with younger students or students with disabilities.

When handling a problem:

- Acknowledge the feelings first; "I understand why you felt like that"
- State the rule; "At school, we x."
- State the reparation; "So what are you going to do to fix what happened?"
- Make arrangements for a time to follow up.
- Follow through on your arrangement.

Teach and model positive self talk:

- I can do this.
- I have a strategy for this.
- This is not worth losing privileges over.

Teach responses to conflict like:

Avoiding eye contact, and saying "Thanks for sharing your opinion" and walk away.

Recognize signs that a child's behaviour is escalating and derail the escalation by asking for help with something.

Make a standing arrangement with a staff member, that the student might 'deliver an important message.' Send the student on the errand when you feel he/she needs a walk or change of scenery.

Share with the student what you do when you are really angry or frustrated.

Tell the student privately or use a secret signal to tell a student when they have done something well or when they need to cool off.

Arrange a private signal with home to communicate the child's emotional state when arriving and leaving school.



Arrange for a 'soft landing' for the student: a place where he/she can come in early or stay late and be away from the crowd.

Provide a mentor to review goals and strategies, receive encouragement, structured teacher feedback, home-school communication.

For more information see *Teaching Students with Learning and Behavioural Differences* at: <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/landbdlif/54.htm> or *Principles of Sustainable Prevention: Designing Scale-Up of School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support to Promote Durable Systems* (2008). Kent McIntosh et al; University of British Columbia.



**DESCRIPTION OF DOMAIN &  
TYPICAL SOURCES OF  
INFORMATION**

– Adapting and coping behaviours to function in a variety of social/community situations. Functional social and emotional behaviour that that supports learning.

– Social and emotional functioning:

- impulse control
- mood disorders
- anxiety
- appropriate reciprocal social behaviour
- appropriate sexual behaviour
- ability to make appropriate social choices
- setting realistic social goals
- sexual awareness and appropriate expression
- turn taking and sharing of materials, equipment and time
- difficulties with routine changes
- depression

**POSSIBLE SOURCES OF  
INFORMATION**

- File review
- Functional Behaviour Analysis
- Vineland-Maladaptive Scale
- Behaviour Assessment System for Children
- Achenbach Scales
- Connor's Rating Scale
- Scales of Independent Behaviour Revised
- Maladaptive
- Behaviour Specialist assessment
- Physician/Child Psychiatrist
- Medication review
- Child & Youth Mental Health Assessment

**SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL FUNCTIONING**

## Planning for Intensive Interventions

Classroom strategies, school-wide and district frameworks are all helpful, but what can be done when an individual needs more intensive support?

In 2008, staff from the Ministry of Education's Diversity and Equity Branch, in consultation with provincial special educators developed the *Behaviour Intervention/Mental Illness Instructional Support Planning Process Tool*.

This tool, to help with the planning process, can be used by school based teams to systematically identify student behaviours based on collection of accurate data and current file information, and identify specific strategies for supporting students based on their strengths and needs.

The tool provides a space to list student profile information and identify specific goals, objectives, strategies and outcome measures.

The planning tool provides a rubric for each of four domains; Social/Emotional Functioning, Communication, Self Determination/Independence and Academic/Intellectual. Each of the four rubrics provides a description of the domain and it's components as well as a list of possible sources of information (see inset to the left as an example). Each section contains descriptors of characteristics and behaviours. The intent is that the team will use accurate, up-to-date data from reliable sources to identify the student's strengths and needs across the continuum, where appropriate, from mild to complex in each of the four domains.

The tool includes examples to help in identifying appropriate levels of support (see below).

Districts who have used the *Behaviour Intervention/Mental Illness Instructional Support Planning Process Tool* indicate that the process becomes a catalyst for rich discussion and insight about the student's strengths and needs. The tool provides a framework for thorough, creative planning and strategizing to provide for the needs of the student, and where necessary, concrete ideas for developing of Individual Education Plans. To download the Instructional Support Planning Tool, visit the Ministry of Education Special Education resources section at:

[http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/docs/behaviour\\_intervention.pdf](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/docs/behaviour_intervention.pdf)

**Examples of Supports**

Mild	Moderate	Complex
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Occasional reminders and prompts</li> <li>•Peer coaching/buddy system for social modeling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Integrated case management</li> <li>•Frequent supervision</li> <li>•Social skills training</li> <li>•Some behaviour intervention regarding social behaviour</li> <li>•Direct life-skills instruction</li> <li>•Structured peer coaching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Intensive, integrated case management</li> <li>•Consistent, direct adult supervision</li> <li>•Safety planning</li> <li>•Time-out/physical interventions plans</li> <li>•Functional life-skills planning</li> <li>•Skill development for independent living</li> </ul>





# Spotlight



## ...on Ministry resources

Did you know that there are a number of helpful resources for teachers of students with special needs?

Check them out at [www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/sped\\_res\\_docs.htm](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/sped_res_docs.htm)

## Instructional Support Planning Tools

Mirroring the *Behaviour Intervention/Mental Illness Instructional Support Planning Process Tool* highlighted on Page 5, other planning tools have been created to assist the collaborative work of support teams. Links to the planning tools are listed below:

**Autism Spectrum Disorder Instructional Support Planning Process:**  
[http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/asd\\_instr\\_supp\\_plan\\_tool.pdf](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/asd_instr_supp_plan_tool.pdf)

**Behaviour Intervention/Mental Illness Instructional Support Planning Process:**  
[http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/docs/behaviour\\_intervention.pdf](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/docs/behaviour_intervention.pdf)

**Learning Disabilities Instructional Support Planning Process:**  
[http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/docs/ld\\_instructional\\_support\\_tool.pdf](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/docs/ld_instructional_support_tool.pdf)

**Physical Disabilities/Chronic Health Impairments Instructional Support Planning Process:**  
[http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/docs/physical\\_disabilities\\_chronic\\_health.pdf](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/docs/physical_disabilities_chronic_health.pdf)

## ...on district practices

Do you know about some of the outstanding things going on in the province?

If you have something you'd like highlighted in "The Spotlight" email us at [EDUC.DiversityandEquity@gov.bc.ca](mailto:EDUC.DiversityandEquity@gov.bc.ca)

## Itinerant Behaviour Teams in SD 43 (Coquitlam)

Coquitlam has four teams each consisting of a behaviour specialist teacher (the team leader), a youth worker and a special education assistant (SEA). Each team supports



approximately one quarter of the district's schools (17 schools per team). The district uses a "family of schools" model so a team works with the elementary, middle and secondary schools in a zone, enabling the team to support a student from K-12, if required. This model ensures students requiring support are identified appropriately as they transition between each level. Teams provide consultative or direct support or a combination of both. The team's SEA can work for periods of time (6-10 weeks) in the class to help stabilize and support the

student. In addition, the SEA models appropriate management strategies to school personnel. The Youth Worker works outside of the classroom with students and parents, building capacity and consistency between school and home. The culture of the district is one of a proactive nature that provides support to children in an inclusive manner who may be experiencing difficulty and demonstrating challenging behaviours at their neighborhood school. SD 43 staff believe this to be more appropriate than adding staff to supervise students in segregated behaviour programs (in a reactive manner) where students rarely experience academic and social success or return to their neighborhood school after they have been excluded from their friends, colleagues and teachers.